

The Commonweal

May 9, 1947

The Right to Strike

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VOLUME XLVI

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NUMBER 4

Next Week

The Hero — Austrian Socialism Hungarian Rebel — The Italian Treaty

THE HERO, or THE MAN NOBODY SEES, by Denis de Rougemont, author of "Love in the Western World," "The Devil's Share," and, now, "The Last Trump," is a dialogue on The Man of Distinction. The conversational adversaries are a man currently in the public eye and the representative of an American business concern which is trying to persuade the celebrity to pose for a liquor advertisement.

A REPLY TO SCHUSCHNIGG, by Norman Thomas, is a friendly but eloquent reply to the article which the former Austrian Chancellor wrote for The Commonweal a few weeks ago. It deals specifically with the rising in 1935 and the political character of the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg regime.

SISTER MARGIT, by Hal Lehrman, is a first-hand sketch of a remarkable Hungarian woman who has found herself at odds with her country's successive regimes beginning with that of Admiral Horthy. It includes exciting accounts of resistance against the Nazis, protection of the Jews and heroic work among the poor of Budapest.

THE ITALIAN TREATY, by A. A. Berle, Jr., is an authoritative criticism from the American standpoint of the treaty now up for ratification before the American Senate. It is timely also in view of the new international commitments of the United States.

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May 9, 1947

NUMBER 4

THE WEEK		83
"INTERCITIZENSHIP"	Roger Picard	86
THE RIGHT TO STRIKE	George A. Kelly	87
THE TORY DILEMMA	J. L. Benvenuti	89
LETTER TO LANCELOT (<i>Verse</i>)	Francis Sweeney	92
THE STAGE	Kappo Phelan	93
THE SCREEN	Philip T. Hartung	94
SLOW PROGRESS	Clara Meng	94
BOOKS OF THE WEEK		96

*Shelley: A Life Story—It May Never Happen—
The Chequer Board—Distinguished Negroes
Abroad—Clever Hands of the African Negro—
There Was Once a Slave—Opportunity in
Alaska—Gods and Heroes—Irish Gold—Colum-
bia Dictionary Modern European Literature—
How to Become a Literary Critic*

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Dollars for Propaganda

ACCORDING to the Washington office of the New York *Herald Tribune*, members of the Eightieth Congress are crying for an end to the steady flow of pleasant abuse they have been receiving from the press and radio these past few months. The Congressmen are said to feel that their day-to-day performances have been more dignified and worthwhile than the voters have been permitted to believe. Among those who have expressed themselves most strongly on this point are three Congressmen who are described by the *Tribune* as "the most powerful Republicans in the House."

The Congressmen have one part of their story correct, all right: members of the Eightieth Congress have received more than the normal amount of printed vilification traditionally devoted to their caste. But it is easy to see why they have frequently appeared so inept to the people who are paid to watch their activities from the press gallery. Those three powerful Republican members of the House might have less reason to complain of ill-treatment if they gave more thought to the ragged pronouncements issued by some of

the committees they control—some of their sub-committees in charge of appropriations, for example.

Last week, at about the same time that some Congressmen were pleading for a more considerate press, a number of their fellows decided to turn off the money that has been sustaining the State Department's Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, headed by Assistant Secretary William Benton. That neat little demonstration of the new Republican economy, if sustained by the Senate, will mean the end, by June 30, of the State Department's attempt to spread the American word to the Soviet Union and sixty-six other countries. The saving will amount to a little more than twenty-one million dollars—by action of the same men who, several days earlier, voted in favor of spending the four hundred million dollars which, at the very least, will be necessary to maintain steadiness and freedom at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Even the most jovial and friendly Washington correspondent would find it difficult to congratulate the Congressmen on this demonstration of consistency. Instead, a high-minded newspaperman would be required to report that (a) the Congressmen seem to have overlooked the connection between the State Department's propaganda work and the Truman Doctrine, or (b) although most of the Congressmen voted in favor of that Doctrine, their enthusiasm for it appears to be limited, or (c) they are determined to put on some kind—any kind—of an economy show for the benefit of the people who sent them to Washington, or (d) they resent the increasing power and importance of the State Department, and suspect the political inclinations of Mr. Benton and his assistants.

A Washington correspondent who reported the situation in this way would be correct. Members of the House Appropriations Committee who are determined to undo the State Department's cultural and information program are probably somewhat affected by every one of those reasons. But for the sake of friendliness and toleration we will assume that the first reason best explains this instance of irregular Congressional performance: the Representatives, in their haste, have forgotten that the Truman Doctrine and such things as Mr. Benton's project are parts of the same idea. So, for the sake of the Senators (who will soon be in a position to review the House suggestion and, if they choose, to return that twenty-one million dollars to the State Department) it seems worthwhile to underline several facts that the Representatives have unintentionally ignored.

In order to prevent snickering in some quarters and serious disappointment in others, it is necessary that the United States foreign policy develop consistently from this moment on. The

world must be told—frequently, and in every possible way—exactly what America is up to. We think we have a pretty good thing here, and we plan to do every peaceful thing we can to encourage world-wide enthusiasm for its best features. We may not succeed, but we hope, at least, to save a lot of people from something much less desirable. The best way to get word of this around is through a method which, in late years, has come to sound pretty frightful: propaganda. We do not intend to deceive anyone, but we do intend to get a hearing. We agree with the Congressmen who have pointed out that the version of America Mr. Benton has been sending abroad has been an uneven one. Nevertheless, he is on the job and has the machinery set up to go on with it. It would be foolish to disband his office and force him off the air now. The twenty-one million dollars he needs in order to keep going will do a lot for that other four hundred million.

Two Steps

THE STATUS of the American Negro remains the most flagrant stain upon our democratic escutcheon. It takes a lot of the conviction out of our advocacy of the Four Freedoms. It is the most troubling element in any honest picture of the American way of life. And to dismiss it as a local or regional problem, a simple legacy of Reconstruction days endemic only in the American South is indeed to distort the situation.

The most acute manifestation is, of course, segregation. The relegation of a group which comprises one-tenth of the population to the status of second-class citizenship and untouchability in some states does not even permit the right to vote. In every sector of the country it denies the Negro his due right to jobs, educational opportunities and facilities generally open to other fellow-citizens. But from the days of the Abolitionists onwards intervention from the North has produced increased resistance in the region where division and segregation are most firmly entrenched—where second-class human status for the Negro is almost universally accepted.

The chief hope of improving the status of the Negro in the South—aside from the example that could be set in Northern cities—resides in Southerners themselves. Hence the importance of a recent incident in New Orleans. When Xavier College, a Negro institution in that city, asked to send a delegate to a college conference at Louisiana State on the formation of a National Student Organization, the Student Council of the University refused on the grounds of expediency. Whereupon the *LSU Daily Reveille* took up the cudgels on behalf of this request. A feature editorial was followed on succeeding days by impassioned letters of protest from individuals and groups of students. The demand for a plebiscite

gathered strength until a week after its original news story the *Daily Reveille* was able to report that the student body had voted almost 2 to 1 to invite Negro students "to participate in the conference of Southern and Southwestern Schools to be held on the LSU campus." A heartening gesture in which a college paper and a large southern student body have important shares.

Whereas intervention in the South by people from other sections of the nation is *per se* of limited effectiveness, what transpires in the national capital is in a different category. Citizens from every sector have direct responsibility in such matters as the barring of Negro reporters from the Congressional press galleries. Also appropriate is nationwide protest against any other racial discrimination in the nation's capital city. The ultimatum which the Actors Equity Association has just presented to the National Theater in Washington could, in fact, hardly be more apposite. Its key importance is emphasized by the fact that the National is the only "legitimate" theater in Washington. Actors Equity (the actors' union) has given the theater a year to allow Negroes to buy seats along with everybody else. Otherwise no Equity members will appear on the stage in Washington. Equity has, in this warning, the collaboration of the Dramatists Guild and the pledge of thirty-nine of the nation's leading playwrights to refuse the National Theater to show any of their plays unless this forthright demand for the admission of Negroes is complied with by the end of the next twelve months.

It is all very well to ascribe Jim Crowism to local custom as a means of self-justification. That would serve as a weak argument in any American community. But when the city in question is the capital of the world's leading political democracy—rival in the international arena of an expanding totalitarian system which claims to practice absolute racial equality—that argument simply will not go down. America's racial disabilities will probably have to be abolished step by step; the end of Jim Crowism in Washington's one "legitimate" theater is one step which is long overdue.

Organizing Farm Workers

CALIFORNIA is appropriately the focus for the organizing drive of the National Farm Labor Union (AFL) now building up momentum. Not only has it in the past year or two edged out Iowa as the state with the biggest cash income for farm products, but California farmers personally have never had so much money. The April 30 *Wall Street Journal* reports, for instance that "in California, many fruit growers spurn low-priced cars they formerly bought with the aid of liberal credit. Now they're purchasing Buicks and Chryslers—for cash." So that these farmers are equal to the higher wages which go with organizing the unorganized and certainly are more than justi-

fied in this case. But it is even more important now because the great bulk of the unparalleled farm spending currently reported is for labor-saving machinery, with the demand so terrific that the black market for second-hand machines is rampant. Propertyless farm workers require decent wages, but they also need tenure, status, an assured annual income, a respected place in the American community. Hence the key importance of the national AFL drive for organizing funds in rural areas and of the National Farmer Labor Union campaign for organization and collective bargaining in California's well-heeled largest industry. Meanwhile the first union contract, with job security, has been signed by two hundred fruit pickers in Florida.

Arabs in Flushing

ONCE AGAIN there are the pictures of the Arabs in the papers and perhaps you can only understand the Arabs when you are Lady Hester Stanhope, or Sir Richard Burton, or Colonel (or Pvt.) Lawrence, but perhaps they are very simple to understand only we do not usually have anything to talk with them about—except archeology or oilfields. The Arabs came to the Peace Conference in Paris; now they are here again after another war. Since the fashion of their dress does not change they look as if they were the same three Arabs here in Flushing Meadow whom we watched going into the Crillon in Paris in 1918—as if one of them had been the same Arab ever since he had carried frankincense or myrrh, traveling with the other two kings on the first Epiphany. A very ancient people.

It is not worth while even remembering what they were asking for in Paris after the other war, or what was promised them and not given. But you have to know what they are asking for now, because everyone (including the United States and Russia) is asking for something in the Middle East, in the Mediterranean, and the Arabs are politically conscious (as the Marxists say of the working classes) and if no one knows what they are asking for, if no one listens to them, they can make an immense amount of trouble.

What they are asking for immediately at the UN General Assembly's special session is an independent Palestine. They want the British to get out of Palestine.

The Jews in Palestine have been asking that for some time. Ever since the Balfour Declaration (1917), encouraging the Jews to make a national home in Palestine, they have been urging the British to get out and let them have their home. They have wanted to fill that home with all the homeless. Already they have filled it with the century-old poetic tradition of the exile's

return; next year, they said year after year, next year in Jerusalem.

That is what the Zionists kept saying. There were not so many Zionists among the Jews of the world; where conditions were possible, most Jews were content to remain where they were born; where conditions were better than merely possible, where conditions were almost those of elementary justice, most Jews loved the lands in which they were born, and were completely identified with the life of the nations in which they lived, serving those nations and honored within them. It has been that way in France, in England, in Italy; for a long time it was that way in Germany.

There were always Zionists and it was impossible not to have great sympathy for people who remembered their origins, no matter how distant in time, how difficult to trace. (Just as there always have been Irish like that, dreaming of Ireland—just as there were few Irish who returned.) When Europe lost humanity and honor, the number of Zionists increased. Those whom Europe had failed to murder, Europe made homeless; the homeless sought this distant, this ancestral home. It was not possible for one to refuse the greatest sympathy to these tired men and women who turned this way and that finding no hospitality, no friendship anywhere, finding no justice anywhere, who sought a strange land (after all) but still a land in which they would not be strangers.

England prevented, and prevents, these people from reaching Palestine in numbers. Because they are so lost, so desperate, England's action, to many, has seemed harsh. But because the English have never been anti-semitic, it has also seemed necessary to many people that, in justice, some explanation be sought for their conduct.

The Arabs at Flushing Meadow are this explanation. The Jewish home in Palestine is not untenanted; there are Arabs in some of the rooms. If the Jewish home were to become a nation it would be a nation immediately at war against great numbers—and soon a massacred nation. If Palestine were to become an independent Arab state, as the Arab League is asking, the Zionists could live in it only on sufferance, precariously if at all.

The Palestinian problem now has been brought where it should be brought—before the assembled nations. Final responsibility is theirs, not England's. For they—if all of them act—can remove the pressure that makes men in despair seek out Palestine as sole refuge. They can make it possible for these men to live wherever they are. By doing this they will make it possible for Jews and Arabs to live also in peace. Only a return to justice in Europe and in America (immigration) can make justice possible in Palestine.

C. G. PAULDING.

"Intercitizenship"

RECENTLY, Senator Richard Russell, Democrat, of Georgia, offered a bold, though perhaps premature, proposition suggesting a union of the governments of England, Wales, Scotland and Eire and the United States. According to his plan, each of those British States would send to Congress two senators and a number of representatives based on its population. For these united governments there would be one set of laws, one policy, one community of federal interests, one nationality.

The plan is similar to the one which, in more perilous circumstances, Churchill offered France. It was at the time of the great collapse of 1940 that the British Premier proposed a fusion of the French and British nations. They would have formed one government, headed by a Frenchman, and their institutions would have been joined together. At that time events forbade acceptance of the offer, and, since 1940, it has not been repeated. But it proved, as the suggestion of Senator Russell demonstrates today, that the idea of federation or fusion of nations is, to a certain extent, under consideration in all countries.

It is very unlikely that a fusion of nations on the pattern "France-England" or "England-United States" will be accomplished at once or even in the near future. Whatever the success in store for such federated structures, it would seem possible to adopt, without too many difficulties, a more limited, more conservative system, but one promising many important advantages. This system might be called "intercitizenship."

The proposal would consist basically of an agreement between several countries, for instance, France, England and the United States. According to the agreement, the nationals of each of the united countries would enjoy all citizenship rights of the other members of the union. This simple provision would permit an American living in France, or a Frenchman staying in England, to be considered a true citizen of the country in which he chose to live.

A first consequence of this proposal would allow the citizens of all three countries the right of free movement from one country to another, without reference to official authorization, quotas or visas. They would be allowed to choose their residence, to maintain or leave it according to their wishes, limited only to compliance with formalities imposed by local law.

Secondly, naturalization, with its long and complicated processes, with its unpalatable disavowals, would grow useless, since everyone would keep his *own* nationality, but would acquire an intercitizenship which would grant all the practical benefits of naturalization. All the professions would be equally accessible in each of the

countries, limited only by the technical and moral qualifications of the applicant.

Thirdly, the simple fact of a Frenchman living in America or an American residing even temporarily in Britain, would give him the right to duly perform all legal procedures, as regulated by the laws of the country in which he was residing. This would include both deeds pertaining to persons, such as those of marriage or divorce, or deeds concerning properties and estates. These deeds would be fully acknowledged and enforced in all the countries bound by intercitizenship. Thus, conflicting laws, which cause so many difficulties in the field of international affairs, would be wiped out, and the judgments given in one of the countries would be valid and enforceable in the others, without any special formality.

Finally, each national of these connected countries would enjoy political rights in the country where he was residing, so long as he remained there. For instance, an Englishman or an American having lived in a French town for the period required of every Frenchman before being registered on the electoral lists, would be entered on those lists. He would thus participate in voting each time he was in France on an election day. The eligibility would be granted to him on the same conditions as to Frenchmen.

In addition to these advantages, there would be responsibilities incumbent upon the citizens. Chiefly these would be taxes and military duties. Intercitizenship would permit each national of the affiliated nations to discharge various duties of citizenship in any one of these countries, provided he had complied with the requirements existing in the country he chose for a residence. Double imposition would no longer be feared.

Intercitizenship would not infringe on the political, economic or financial sovereignty of the allied countries. Each of them would continue to keep its own political and legal institutions, its diplomatic representatives, its budget, customs and tariffs. But it is certain that the exchange of men, ideas and influences would increase between such allied countries. Such a union would give them many opportunities to achieve unity in technical, economic, legal customs, and to advance and harmonize their cultural and moral interests.

Intercitizenship seems to me a measure comparatively easy to enact more quickly than any kind of federalism or world government. Intercitizenship could later be extended to include other countries of similar cultural kinship. It would be the beginning of new ties among nations, and of future progress in the field of international solidarity.

ROGER PICARD.

Any step is a good one if it crosses any one of the obsolete barriers which obstruct world unity. The author of this suggestion is a recognized authority on international law.

THE EDITORS.

Civil Servants

Government workers and the right to strike

George A. Kelly

A FIERCE BATTLE is currently being waged in the legislative halls of the country. American workingmen are squaring off against hostile lawmakers. The whole dispute revolves around the question: What are the fundamental rights of labor? No group of workers, however, have more to fear for their rights than those who work for government itself. Within the past year legislators have successfully passed measures curtailing, if not denying, the right of government employees to form a union, to strike, and to have a closed shop.

Carefully planned anti-union strategy seems to call for the initial attack on labor to be directed against civil servants. Those who work for municipal, state, or federal governments are most vulnerable. They lack the economic and political power necessary to forestall restrictive legislation. More significantly, anti-union lawmakers realize that the American people will more readily accept anti-strike bills aimed at public workers than bills more general in scope. In their estimation, it is only a matter of time before such laws will be extended to non-government workers.

The present attempt, therefore, to outlaw strikes by government workers is not only the concern of 5 million civil servants. The rights of 60 million American workers are at stake. It all started in Washington. In June, 1946, Congress passed the Ball-Russell-Wherry rider to several appropriation bills. This rider provided that no part of government money was to pay the salary or wages of any person who engaged in a strike against the federal government or who belonged to a union advocating such a strike. This line of reasoning was further extended this year by a California District Court of Appeals which denied government employees the legal right of union membership. Only a month ago, Governor Dewey signed his own dictated Condon-Wadlin Bill, outlawing all strikes by public workers in New York State. Other states are considering similar bills, notably Pennsylvania.

In the light of these laws, therefore, government employees are understandably concerned. Have they the moral right to strike? If they have such a right, may the State deny them the exercise of that right?

If the matter were put to a vote, it is likely

that many Americans would deny public workers the right to strike. This attitude, however, can hardly be credited to a series of horrible experiences with strikes against the government. In the history of the United States, strikes by public employees have been few. David Ziskind's painstaking research was able to unearth only 1,116 strikes by government employees between 1835 and 1940. Such strikes as did occur involved mechanics, teachers, letter men, policemen, firemen, and even State Senators. The majority of the striking workers were unorganized. On the other hand, there have been as many strikes in private industry within a single month. Strikes in the coal and steel industry have been greater in length, extent, and severity than any strike of government workers.

It is truer to say that public hostility against strikes by civil servants has been engendered by lurid headlines. Visions of cities in flames, of criminals openly stalking their innocent prey, of city-wide epidemics, have become nightmares for a gullible reading public. Newspaper readers were led to believe that strikes by public workers caused so much harm that not even the legitimate grievances of the workers justified them. It was the *depicted evils*, therefore, that created the public state of mind, not the fact that the strikers were government employees. Even Governor Dewey, to bolster his approval of the Condon-Wadlin Bill, raised the bogey of strikes by policemen and hospital staffs.

Current public opinion doubtless forced existing unions of government workers to deny themselves, in their constitutions, the right to strike. Such unions, however, have not taken this position out of any clear-cut idea that government servants did not possess that right. Union officials acted on the assumption that the public condemned all strikes by government workers. Their fears, nevertheless, were groundless. The more exact statement of public opinion would be that the American people disapproved of strikes by certain categories of civil servants.

Statutory law in this country reveals the same confusion on this crucial issue. Outside of the Ball-Russell-Wherry amendment, no federal law explicitly denies the right of government employees to strike. The only clear-cut case on fed-

eral statute books involves postal employees. They may join unions providing they do not thereby obligate themselves to engage in strikes. The Wagner Act does not cover public workers, nor do the "Baby" Wagner Acts in the several states. The practice of the Tennessee Valley Authority indicates a positive, rather than a negative, attitude toward the unionization of its workers. As an independent government corporation, it has encouraged its 70,000 workers to organize. It holds agreements with fifteen labor unions. The workers participate in setting wage scales, improving production standards, introducing labor-saving devices, and ironing out labor-management grievances. The strike is not outlawed on the TVA. Rather is it the labor policy of the government administrators to make strikes unnecessary. Instead of banning strikes, the TVA seeks to eliminate their causes. This policy has been eminently successful.

Municipal and State laws regarding the legality of strikes by public workers vary from place to place. In spite of the anti-labor bias of many state legislatures, the unionization of city and state employees has expanded in recent years. *The Twentieth Century Fund* reports that, during the year 1943-1944, the AFL and the CIO signed thirty-two agreements with city governments. Only eight of these agreements expressly outlaw strikes. In the remaining contracts the matter of striking is an open question. The workers covered by these agreements include mechanics, janitors, laborers, street cleaners, attendants, technicians, teachers, clerks, bookkeepers, stenographers, foremen and superintendents of repair crews.

★

To maintain that government employees have the right to strike is one thing. To permit them to exercise that right under any and all circumstances is quite another question.* There does not seem to be any reason for denying to government workers the right to strike. On the contrary, since the right to strike is a natural right, we must affirm that it belongs to *all* workers. This right flows from the fact that all men are born free, endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. And the right to reject proposed conditions of work is one of these rights. Workers do not cease to be human beings simply

because their employer happens to be the government. Their natural rights spring from nature. Not even the State can take them away. If the State can abolish this right, it can destroy other rights, even the right to life itself.

In order to exercise their right to strike, however, all workers must meet certain conditions. There must be a just reason for striking. They must have reasonable hope of success. The strike must be the last resort. And finally, the good which is accomplished must outweigh the evil effects. The act of striking, therefore, is neither intrinsically good nor intrinsically bad. Circumstances determine whether or not workers may exercise this right. If *any* group of workers can meet these conditions for a just strike, they cannot be accused of moral wrong in striking.

The important question, then, is: Can government employees ever meet the conditions necessary to justify their striking?

Some authorities maintain they cannot. They argue that a strike by government workers is "an attack on state sovereignty," or results in "the paralysis of government," or finally that it is "conducive to anarchy." The general conclusion of these men is that the evils attendant on a strike by public workers are so great that no cause is strong enough to justify it. How great these evils are in fact will depend largely on what we conceive to be the function of good government.

The circles of government activity are many. Basic to the very idea of good government is the *making and enforcing of laws concerning the order, peace, and security of society and the rights of the persons and groups composing it*. Thus, every government has rulers, lawmakers, courts, policemen, armed forces, jailers, etc. Over and above this primary function, government engages in what have been called *essential public services*. These services are undertaken by the State because no private group can or will undertake them. They vary from people to people and from age to age. Thus governments own, among other things, water works, hospitals, railroads, and schools. At one time these services were performed by private agencies and, in many parts of the world, are still mainly a non-governmental function. Thirdly, there are *non-essential public services* of government, such as the erection of parks, museums, libraries, recreational centers, etc. Finally, the State often owns and operates *profit-making enterprises*, as for example, the match industry, retail stores, hotels, and lotteries.

We must not believe that the circles of government activity are static. They expand and contract from century to century. Today we live in an era of government expansion. How much of the construction industry or how many of the utilities will remain outside of government control in the next hundred years is problematical.

*This distinction is an important one. It is not made out of any desire to split hairs. Around each person there exists an indestructible wall of natural rights. Within this wall man reigns supreme. Ordinarily, he must exercise his rights in accordance with the requirements of the general welfare. But given proper circumstances, his individual rights will prevail even over the rights of the State. That wall may never be broken down.

We must ask ourselves, therefore, whether state sovereignty has unlimited scope. Are those workers who perform on the periphery of government operation ruled by the same sovereignty as those workers in the innermost circle, and without whom good government could not even exist? Would a strike by city butchers, or by repairmen on state highways, or by attendants in a national park, or even by teachers, result in a paralysis of government? Are such strikes really "against" the State? Are we faced with anarchy as a result of them? This writer does not think so.

As a matter of fact greater justification would seem to be necessary for certain strikes in private industry than for strikes by some classes of public workers. Certainly, strikes by nurses in a private hospital cannot be compared with strikes by the office help on some municipal transportation system. Only one conclusion seems to follow from an analysis of the realities of the situation. It is that the morality of strikes by civil servants is not to be determined simply by the fact that workers are government employed. Basically, a sound moral judgment on that matter will depend on the evils that such strikes inflict on society.

A more thoughtful approach to this question would seem to suggest the truth of the following propositions:

1. All government employees have the natural right to strike.
2. These workers may exercise this right in the same fashion as non-government workers, providing that they can meet the conditions for a just strike.
3. Some categories of public workers are unable, under ordinary circumstances, to meet these conditions and thus are morally bound to refrain from striking, e.g. policemen and firemen.
4. The State, therefore, may not deny the right of government workers to strike.
5. The State, however, may limit the exercise of this right by government workers, where a strike by such workers would jeopardize public health, safety, or security.
6. A blanket law outlawing all strikes by government workers, regardless of occupation, is essentially immoral and basically totalitarian. In effect, it denies the right to strike to workers who, given the proper circumstances, have a perfect right to do so.
7. A law which limits the use of the strike weapon by any category of public servants should also contain provisions which will insure that the fundamental rights of government workers to adequate pay, decent working conditions, and the settlement of just grievances, will be protected.

Since all strikes by government employees do not paralyze government or destroy the sovereignty of the State, each case must be judged on its merits. On the government rests the burden of proof when it desires to deny to any group of workers the exercise of the natural right to strike.

Nor is the State to be considered helpless in the face of a disastrous strike by government workers, actual or threatened. It may properly limit the right to strike of such workers by requir-

ing cooling off periods, fact-finding, mediation and arbitration. Of course, the greatest weapon in the hands of government in matters of this kind is its power to remove the causes of conflict. The State is under an obligation to study industrial conditions, to employ all its influence and authority to secure for the workers their just rights. The State, more than anyone else, has within itself the power to remove the seeds of industrial conflict. Industrial peace is fostered by the State, not through making its workers slaves nor by wiping out the basic rights of labor, but by constructive measures which enable free men to remain free.

The Tory Dilemma

J. L. BENVENISTI

I NOTICE from the American press that the winding-up of Britain as a world empire seems to be very much in people's minds, and that, as far as I can judge, the expression "power vacuum" is becoming as indispensable an ingredient of polite American small talk as were the "complexes" and "libidos" (libidines, if you prefer it) of the time of my boyhood. There are, however, one or two things which some Americans have not got the right way up, and I note in particular a tendency to treat our present economic crisis as a by-product of a kind of British imperial *Gottterdammerung*. That is a mistake. If any purely external factor is influencing the British crisis, it is not the lessening of our imperial authority but the collapse of Europe.

It is important that this should be realized, because too many people still think that our commercial prosperity was based on the forcible holding down of reluctant subject peoples, and that the relative waning of our military and naval power is the cause of our impoverishment. Actually the sequence of cause and effect is the other way round. Our power is waning because we are in an economic jam, not vice versa.

However, even if they do not always get the perspective accurate, it is natural that Americans should be interested in what is happening; for the manner in which the British Empire is bowing itself off the stage of history provides surely a unique and unprecedented spectacle. For my own part, since the thing had to happen at some time or other, if past experience is any guide at all, I am not sorry that it is happening now. We leave a good record behind us of incorrupt and humane administration. We retire with an unsullied name, and we even retire relatively gracefully and in good order. It all might have been a great deal worse.

Of course, when I speak of the British Empire bowing off, I speak loosely. We still have our colonial empire, and that means quite a sizable

piece of real-estate in Africa and other places, but the King will soon no longer be Emperor of India, and it looks as if, with one thing and another, we shall no longer have much say in the Eastern Mediterranean. So I think you are right in saying that the curtain is being rung down. What now remains to be seen is whether we can maintain a certain dignity in our retirement.

In the main, people over here are now surprisingly reconciled to the diminished rôle Britain is to play on the world's stage, and I am with increasing frequency hearing the suggestion, generally made in a jocular spirit but sometimes seriously, that Britain should become the 49th state in the Union. I think those who talk like this have rather muddled ideas about the effect such a step would have, and imagine that the high American standard of life and wages would promptly be transferred to these islands. That, I fear, is an illusion. In many cases we could only keep our industries competitive with yours by continuing to pay much lower wages, and with the tariff wall down I doubt whether, even with a lower rate of wages, we could hold our own. If Britain were indeed to become the 49th state of the Union, our only hope, I think, would be to have about a third of our population transported bodily to the United States.

There is only one tangible advantage that would accrue to us from actual incorporation in the Union, and that advantage I believe we ought to secure without such drastic measures being applied. It is that the burden of common defense should be shared in a ratio that is more in accordance with our respective populations and economic potentials.

That brings me to a discussion of the reaction in Britain to President Truman's declaration. I know that as a good and conscientious reporter I should tell you all about that, and keep up the figment, which underlies this talk of "reaction," that people are gathering in little groups at street corners and discussing the matter "in low and passionate tones" like the peers at Buckingham Palace in Daisy Ashford's "Young Visitors." The truth is, however, that if they are discussing anything, particularly if they are discussing it in low and passionate tones, it is the cessation of mid-week sports or the new heating regulations, which have all the appearance of being devised by an introverted celibate suffering from senile decay; for it is a fact that after May 2nd any flat-dwelling mother who, *faute de mieux*, turns on an electric fire to dry her child's socks, will be committing a criminal act. That, at least, is the position at this writing. The thing may be changed by the time these lines are in print. I for one sincerely hope so.

If they are talking about anything less intimate and domestic, it is probable that people are dis-

cussing the new National Service Bill, which has, as you have doubtless read, just produced a political crisis of a rather extraordinary kind, and on which I should like to say a word.

As the American newspapers will have reported, the British Government came forward a little time ago with a bill introducing an eighteen months period of conscript service for all adult males, followed by a further period of five and a half years during which men would undergo annual training. The Conservative opposition supported the measure, and a substantial company, including seventy Labor rebels, opposed it. Thereupon to everybody's surprise, and to the genuine astonishment of the Tories, who never imagined that anybody would throw so perfect a tactical present into their laps, the Government did a right-about-face, and reduced the period of eighteen months, which they said their military advisers regarded as indispensable, to one of twelve.

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Now this, on any showing, is a pretty funny piece of business. Since while they were changing their minds there was no change in the general international set-up, one cannot but suppose, despite what their supporters are trying to say, that their action was not based on military calculations at all, but was a concession to the various ideological bees in the bonnets of their critics.

The opinions of the latter, as expressed during the debate, fall for the most part into two main groups. One group asserted that conscription was an infringement of liberty and of the democratic ideal, the other group objected to conscription as being part and parcel of a diabolical Anglo-American plot to launch an imperialist war against Russia—and that was the kind of argument to which the British must, I rather think, be held to have yielded.

Now, deplorable as all this may be, and badly as the Labor Party may have come out of it, I am not at all certain that the rather more subtle defection of the Tories is not even worse, since it is the Tories who have let a case go by default which, if they had the genius to rise to the occasion, was in a very special way their concern. For there really is a case that can be, and in a few instances was, made out against the original National Service Bill, a case based on the argument that our present and proposed military commitments are hopelessly beyond our strength, and are for that reason in danger of destroying us.

This was, par excellence, a Tory brief. Put at its lowest level, which is the fiscal one, it was surely a Tory concern to see to it that a tax burden is not imposed on us which will more or less permanently reduce us all to subsistence level, and, whether it is thought of in terms of man-

power or of money (these are, after all, nothing but reflections of each other), the new proposal really did represent the last straw on the shoulders of our strained economy. Such a burden would of course fall on the nation as a whole, but it would also mean that the annihilating weight lying on the middle and higher income groups would be in danger of becoming permanent, and there are sound ethical and sociological grounds why that should not be allowed to happen. If the Tories are deaf to that kind of consideration, then what, one may well ask, is the good of having a Tory party at all?

Of course, the reasons for this very conspicuous Tory failure are obvious enough. Although a moderate fiscal policy has always been a Tory tradition, it has also been a Tory tradition to pursue a strong foreign policy, and since it is impossible today for Britain to pursue both policies at once, they had to make a choice between the two. I think they have chosen wrong. I think the right Tory line would have been an easing of our burden by the closest possible integration of our defense commitments with those of the United States. I think, moreover, that this policy would have been a natural and proper one for the Tories to pursue, for most Tories are mildly pro-American, and some of them, like Churchill, fanatically so. In this way, there would still be a chance of preserving some of those values which, one has always been given to understand, the Tories exist to protect.

And here I can discern from many a liberal-minded American reader an exclamation of surprise and even of horror that I am by implication pleading for the preservation of a reasonably stratified society, and I suppose, within limits, of personal and hereditary wealth, and that I am elevating these things almost to the level of an ethical principle. Well, it is easy for Americans to scoff, for they are themselves still living in an order of society where these things are not wholly destroyed, and so cannot judge just what really happens when they disappear. That is where I have the advantage of them, for I can judge it all too well, and as the old upper and middle income groups disintegrate (to be replaced here and there, it is true, by the delightful new royalty of the Black Market) I can see all about me the steady decline in intellectual quality. It is evident in our universities, and in our schools, and in the tone of our political life, and there is no doubt that this is a case of cause and effect.

The truth, which it is nowadays somewhat unfashionable to face, is that the production of men of mental attainments is favored by two conditions; first, a certain minimum level of material independence, secondly a cultivated home background in which there is an accepted currency of good information and good talk. Men can and

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do attain to eminence without these things, and a wise state will do all it can to pick and encourage such individuals. But the cultivated and moderately prosperous home, fertilized of course by the best academic stimuli, still remains the chief breeding ground of intellectual excellence, and to imagine that schools and scholarships and a system of state-subsidized cramming can adequately replace it, is to be the victim of a delusion.

In writing in this way I believe I am writing both as a Catholic and a democrat. I am writing as a democrat because the views I have just expressed postulate a belief, which I hold ardently, not in human inequality, but in human equality. I am convinced that humanity is much of a muchness in moral and intellectual potential, and if you pick out a handful at random and give them a privileged or semi-privileged position, you will find that among a liberal sprinkling of wasters, alcoholics, Bertie Woosters and chorus-girl-chasers, you get a crop of first-rate minds. Nature and the law of averages will do the trick, and do it much better than any system of state-aided talent spotting, for the state, except when it is spotting for the kind of talent that makes the higher bureaucrat (which is not very important), never really knows what it is spotting for, and in any case the highest forms of talent often only emerge after maturity, and so cannot be spotted for at all.

I say that in writing thus I am writing as a democrat and an essential egalitarian, but I believe I am also writing as a Catholic, for I think, I hesitate to dogmatize about this, that the Catholic instinct with its insistence on the rôle of family and parental influence is on my side. But above all I believe that I am writing as a sensible man, for I am convinced that good statesmanship, and even, to put the matter at its lowest level, good generalship, comes from the same kind of spiritual stuff as good literature and good scholarship and the kind of good-humored savoir faire that derives from wide social horizons. I therefore believe that it will pay us better, even as a matter of military expediency, to build up a strategic reserve of this kind of stuff (though it means that we count for less in the order of immediate material power), than to be stretched continually to breaking point during the peace, so that the outbreak of the next war finds us spiritually and materially exhausted.

Now, these opinions are of course purely personal, and you are fully at liberty to disagree with them, but they are surely worthy of consideration. Yet, thanks to what I have called the Tory defection, they wholly lack an advocate, a circumstance which oddly enough may ultimately prove more embarrassing to the Tories than to anybody else.

We have just had our Budget, and, following

the accepted practice, Mr. Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, came to the microphone and explained precisely where he was going to hit us. He was followed next evening in the usual way by an opposition speaker, in this case Sir John Anderson. Naturally, Sir John deplored the fact that our present tax burden amounts to well over a third of our national income, but he felt compelled immediately to explain that he in no wise desired to cut down our social services and educational expenditure. Indeed, he claimed, quite justifiably, that the country could thank the Tories for these things quite as much as they could thank Labor, since they had all been blueprinted under the Coalition. But when he might have been expected to specify the departments in which expenditure should be cut down, Sir John was eloquently silent, and yet it was precisely on this point one would have liked very much to hear what he had to say. Some reduction could, of course, be made in the various subsidies that hold down the cost of living, but few people would advocate more than a moderate cut in these, so there is only one form of pruning left that is possible—and that is defense, and we are wondering how long it will be before the Tories accept the logic of their own position.

Letter to Lancelot

(For Thomas Merton)

Yes.

The morning has its syllogisms too,
The logic of sunlight antiphonal to the premise.
Greedy of life the little pigs suckle the recumbent sow,
While the jigsawed conifers ponder unruffled,
The young oaks stacked upon the wind.

Majestic the guileless morning, as brightly habited as a bankrupt
Beyond the fall of dice and the doom of lottery,
Visits his rolling diocese, the great ring unwinking,
Careless of our woe, of the ache in the gullet,
Unembarrassed by the paper prayers burned in the astrologer's joss-house.

I have heard the white monks singing in the taperlight
Before the rumor of day.
And the cave where I played sleep's witless horrors and pursuits
Was filled with the morning-color.
The roads that ran in skeins, the mazes without laughter
Are straight as abacus wires.
I have taken the king's shilling,
I have pawned my lute and my knife and the shell of Compostella;
The bitten, the notched, the counterfeit sixpence I wager
For chance of a golden guinea.
Oh lamb-world blind in the thickets,
Dear as my blood and the red heart's leather!
The morning, yes.

FRANCIS SWEENEY.

The Stage & Screen

The Flies

AN ASTONISHING production of Jean-Paul Sartre's second offering of the season has been presented by Erwin Piscator's Dramatic Workshop of the New School at the President Theater, and certainly deserves mention in this column. A good deal more mention, I may say, than I feel capable of giving it. The piece was produced in France during the most desperate time of the occupation and is, I judge, a less clear vehicle for the author's particular brand of Existentialism than his later one-act, "No Exit," seen on Broadway this season and recently awarded the Drama Critics Circle's Foreign Citation. The present play projects the author's reworking of the Orestes-Electra myth and in this reworking the significance of the title is paramount. The "Flies" throughout the plot are employed as symbols for the Furies, goddesses of remorse. When this Orestes reaches Argos, he finds the "Flies" in possession of the city; the people, through the guilt of Aegisthus, their murderer-King, committed to a religion of remorse, a religion which keeps order in the city and is therefore approved by Zeus, the order-giving god. On the customary holiday of horrible ritual, which is the yearly culmination of the religion, Orestes watches Electra (a girl who dreams of revenge) attempt to defy the rulers, her father's murderers, and to overthrow the hideous religious order. She is defeated by a miracle of Zeus. Orestes, revealing himself to her as her brother, is also treated to a similar marvel, but since he does not believe in it, he is not defeated. In that one moment of disbelief he becomes a *perfectly free man* incapable of being controlled by a god and therefore entirely able to murder the King and Clytemnestra. The final act is devoted to a gigantic and dramatic argument between the hero and Zeus, at the end of which Orestes freely departs into an agonized but free exile, taking with him the "Flies" and leaving Zeus, one supposes, to the formulation of some slightly different Olympian order for the town.

In this philosophical and intellectual welter (and it is a welter: not only are fragmented findings out of Shaw and Shakespeare and the New Testament presented, but also, and certainly more comprehensibly, out of C. G. Jung and folk-tale) I am certainly not equipped to find any spiritual or scientific dynamic. The conception of freedom is admittedly nihilistic: gods, men, and nature reject the hero. The author seems to be implying that a conscienceless man can commit a good crime, *can* be a hero. But if he is conscienceless, what can be a crime to him, what can be a good? Particularly politically is the conception absurd. Not the least astonishing facet of this production seems to me to be the entirely innocent (I believe) scheme of the producers of prefacing it with a short movie showing the late Adolf Hitler in all his most evil guises as an opposition to Sartre's philosophical conception in the play. But I honestly believe that a clear examination of the play could find small difference be-

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tween these two heroes, and that *der Fuehrer* could very easily have taken on the rôle of Orestes, and vice versa. This conclusion seems to bring whatever novel philosophy there may be in the piece closer to the "Absurdism" of Camus—of which Eleanor Clark (with qualifications) remarks in the *Kenyon Review*, it "is perfectly good neo-dada and like its equivalents after the last war contains nothing to keep anyone from becoming a nazi . . ." rather than to any responsible contribution to Existentialism. Until he is more widely published and played here, it is of course unfair to attempt to condemn Sartre's thought, but I think it is possible to state that, so far, it seems precarious to believe that he has anything positive to contribute to the Existential system which, springing from Kierkegaard, is occupying serious men in France and elsewhere. That Sartre has a great dramatic contribution to make is patent. Both plays presented here this season have been tightly wrought, absorbing, entirely actable theater. His dramatic sense is both sure and daring. Because of its philosophic eclecticism, a process whereby one is kept reeling not among heresies, which is the clear-cut method of Shaw, but rather among a partial selection of values, what might be called a *mess of myths*, this longer piece is more frustrating for an audience to try to attend. But it is dramatically exciting and there are esthetic extensions to be learned from it. I have called the production astonishing not only because of its movie augmentation of the original script but also because it is extremely well acted by Mr. Piscator's troupe. Willis Knighton's designs and John McGrew's inventive projections (making the most of the tiny stage) seemed to me brilliant and were astutely handled by Paul Ransom, the director. The projected music, also fine. I think the play should be seen as well as thoroughly argued. (*At the President.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

No Tinkling Cymbal

"**O**DD MAN OUT" is the kind of a film about which it is difficult for a critic to speak calmly. In the first place it is such a gem from the cinematic point of view that anyone who takes motion pictures seriously delights in its construction. Secondly it is so beautifully photographed (most of the outdoor scenes were taken in Belfast) that it continues to give esthetic pleasure long after one has seen the finale. Furthermore it tells a story that is perfectly adapted to all its thriller aspects and still stands up as intelligent adult entertainment.

Without doubt Carol Reed deserves major credit, for it was he who produced and directed this screenplay written by Robert Sherriff and F. L. Green from Green's novel. And it is director Reed who is mainly responsible for the many fine characterizations which give the film a dignity and authenticity which put it in a class by itself. In spite of the fact that James Mason (around whom has grown a Hollywood-like aura of glamor) plays the lead in this English movie, it is the other characters and their relationships to the whole, as well as to Johnny, that make the greatest impression. Johnny is the chief of the Irish organization that goes out to rob a mill for funds. He kills a man during the incredibly tense robbery and is

himself wounded. And the rest of the picture is taken up with the search for the wounded man. The police get on the trail immediately, and soon track down various other members of the organization.

Then the man-hunt concentrates on Johnny, and the pursuers are mainly three: the police who are drawing close to their prey; Johnny's girl who believes that Johnny cannot stand being taken alive and hopes to reach him first—to kill him; and Father Tom who wants to hear Johnny's confession and comfort his soul. As the race for Johnny gets more and more exciting, the afternoon fog turns to rain in the evening and then to snow in the night. The entire action takes place from four until midnight; clocks remind us of the passing time as Johnny grows weaker and death comes nearer.

James Mason plays Johnny well and is especially effective in the big scene in the studio of the half-crazed artist (Robert Newton) who wants to paint a dying man. It is then that Johnny deliriously remembers Father Tom whose voice they always drowned with their own shouting; and he quotes the magnificent passage from St. Paul: "When I was a child, I spoke as a child . . . when I became a man . . . we see through a glass darkly . . . and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass." But "Odd Man Out" does not concentrate only on Johnny. It is a study in people, in their reaction to the wounded leader and in their response. Carol Reed has directed this cast, most of whom are unfamiliar in this country, with a great understanding of people and of cinema portrayal: F. J. McCormick as the mean little man who would sell Johnny to the highest bidder; W. G. Fay as the priest whose interest is in saving Johnny's soul at whatever cost; Kathleen Ryan as Johnny's girl who will not listen to the priest and whose action in the finale invites the suicidal ending—an ending that is disturbing but in character with her line of reasoning; Fay Compton and Beryl Meason as the two housewives who pick up Johnny and try to help him in one of the film's few humorous scenes; and many, many more excellent characterizations—some developed at length.

Cinematically the last half of the film moves at a slower pace than the first part, but it is this thoughtful second half that gives this picture its meaning and extraordinary dignity. To audiences who believe in an after life, the priest's efforts to reach Johnny take on emotional qualities that make these scenes even more exciting than the earlier chase episodes. "Odd Man Out" is a thriller backed up by great thought; it is an unusual movie—one as interested in the watchers of the race as well as in the hunted who fled down the labyrinthine ways of his own mind.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Slow Progress

CLARA MENG

THE GERMAN press which survived the collapse of the Third Reich was only a fragment of that which had existed at its beginning. First they (Tr. the nazis) had eliminated the most unfavorable papers and had removed the outspoken opponents of their position; the newspapers of political parties were confiscated and

given to the Phoenix and Konzentra companies; financial manipulations were used to place great concerns like Ullstein in the hands of the Nazi Eher Publishing House. There was still a number of "moderate" papers left that, as far as possible under the barest film of neutrality, were already acknowledged opponents whose opposition at this time was forced to take increasingly more subtle forms—while the ability of their readers to read between the lines had to grow proportionately. As more and more newspapers suffered the "absorption" of 51 percent of their capital by Nazis, the pressure increased constantly. With the enforced discontinuation in 1943 of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* which, as the leading independent newspaper, had assumed an ever greater significance for the whole of Germany, the fate of the German press was sealed. In its last issue, Paul Sethe, the paper's foreign editor, wrote an article called "The End of the Gironde" which symbolized this defeat in a brilliant journalistic performance, subtle enough to evade the attack of the Gestapo.

The drafting of all the men, and the bombing of the large cities in 1944, provided the pretext for the suspension of the entire press, except for a few party sheets. Of the German illustrated press, only two papers remained—the *Berliner Illustrierte* and the Munich *Illustrierte Beobachter*—both practically the property of Eher. When the last moderate papers were dissolved, Eher took over parts of their editorial staffs, so that many contributors to these Nazi papers were neither inwardly nor outwardly party members. Furthermore, as many of their machines and buildings were destroyed in the final days of the war, daily papers in the larger cities were partially edited and printed outside the cities.

The wild flight of people in the last days of the régime caused a new break-up of the editorial and working staffs assembled in the last year. A return of these staffs to work was greatly delayed, when not rendered impossible, by the new zone system.

The complete destruction of the press had, in one way, a good effect: it put an end to the division of the papers into so many opposing camps, an evil which had already existed before 1933. As so many little papers were unable to support themselves, they had fallen into the hands of a few great concerns which were, for the most part, reactionary and which disastrously and covertly controlled public opinion. The reconstruction of the press had to start from nothing, or rather from a mélange of persons whose professional and political past was often completely doubtful. A lack of radio equipment and the loss of most German radio transmitters made some form of news transmission absolutely essential because of the numerous regulations concerning the distribution of food required for daily life. The military government very soon began to publish a small sized news, or official, paper, which from a mere official announcement gradually developed into a regular weekly paper or into a separate newspaper published by the military government side by side with the official paper. In the autumn the system was worked out by which the press now operates in the American and, more or less, in the other western zones: on the average two or three Germans in the zone were licensed to publish a newspaper, for which they assumed full responsibility, but which, in the American sector, was uncensored from the start.

Newspapers for some time appeared twice weekly with

four pages of small or medium-sized formats. The size has now grown to twelve pages appearing from two to six times weekly; only the Berlin papers and the newspapers in the Russian zone, for the most part, appear daily. The advertising section is small and limited in extent (1/6 of the entire paper only). The great need for classified advertisements (mostly of the exchange and barter variety) is satisfied by a special advertisement sheet and by bulletin boards.

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In the French zone the license system was introduced almost simultaneously, but was operated under censorship regulations. In the English section, with a few marked exceptions, newspapers were only licensed for the first time in the spring of 1946, until that time the news sheets of the military government being the current papers.

Because of the paper shortage in the western sections, newspapers were limited essentially to the district where they were published (a separate local edition being provided for individual city and country communities) and even in these districts only a few copies were allotted for general sales; there are not copies enough even for the subscribers—in Stuttgart there is perhaps one newspaper for every seven readers, as opposed to one per person in Berlin. Outside of Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Munich, the cities of the American zone have only one big newspaper which is supposed to be impartial. In Frankfurt the *Frankfurter Rundschau* is considered "leftist," although it has no direct party affiliations. A few months after political parties were permitted, outspoken party weeklies were licensed. None of these is of any significance. Their size is trifling and their editions small, while in the English zone, on the other hand, there are some large newspapers of the outspoken political kind, a few of which may also be found in the French sector.

In the American zone, *Die Neue Zeitung*, published by the American Army in Munich, occupied an exceptional position. This paper is especially significant now because of the foreign contacts it enjoys as an army organ, and, what is of importance, its great size (it is printed on the machines of the *Völkischen Beobachter*), which permits long articles. It has a widespread circulation throughout the whole zone with an edition of from one to three million and is well liked even in those districts which are not pro-allied. It is a not entirely explicable psychological fact that its criticism of German shortcomings and deficiencies was resented by the public much less than those made by the licensed press. On the whole perhaps 46 papers are being published at present in the American zone, the most important being the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* of Munich, the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, strongly anti-fascist, the *Rhein-Neckar Zeitung* of Heidelberg, one of its license-holders being Dr. Heuss, the Württemberg Minister of Culture; the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* of Bremen; and the *Wiesbadener Kurier*, the first paper which was permitted to send issues abroad. The leading paper in the American sector of Berlin is *Der Tagesspiegel*, particularly significant as an outpost—like all Berlin papers, it is published daily and has certain privileges in the transmission of news. Besides its very good political contributions and excellent essays, it has been very popular since its first defense of Dr. Schumacher in his struggle with the SPD. It is completely for-

bidden in the Russian zone because it is considered "fascist."

In the French sphere 18 papers appear with editions large enough to make export to other zones possible; the leading ones are the *Schwäbische Zeitung* of Leutkirch; the very well informed *Südkurier* published in Constance, near the Swiss frontier; the *Badischen Nachrichten* of Freiburg, and the *Kurier* of Berlin. The *Schwäbische Tagblatt* is known for its ability to hide its communistic inclinations under a mask of good humor. The development in the English district is difficult to judge because of the short time for which there has been a licensed press; the Social Democratic *Telegraf* in the English sector of Berlin is very good. The conditions are even harder to survey in the Russian zone, where most of the papers appear daily because most of the paper factories are found there; the level is very different; the tone of even the leading papers is very aggressive, especially in the Berlin sector. The *Tägliche Rundschau* is the official paper of the Russian army; the *Berliner Zeitung* began as the organ of the municipal administration.

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At first the German public eyed the new press with outspoken suspicion; the most widespread argument, corresponding with the general attitude of scepticism and resignation, was: we were betrayed by Hitler before; and now we are again being betrayed by the orders of the Allied Commission. Because of the absolutely necessary political restrictions placed on the press (it was forbidden to criticize Allied measures) burning questions like that of eastern Germany could not be discussed; although this topic was not expressly forbidden, its treatment by the German journalists resembled the fabled journey between Scylla and Charybdis. In fact, every unconsidered word became fuel for an east-west conflict tensely awaited by large nationalistic circles. On the other hand, if the German press remained silent on these questions the public accused it of insincerity. The fact that *Der Neue Zeitung*—as the American army organ—could speak without restraint contributed to its popularity here. In this and similar questions, the whole difficulty of a transition from dictatorship to democracy is reflected. But, in general, the conditions of the press and public have become sounder in the same proportion that the unpopularity of the new German authority has come to match that of the occupying powers, thus offering the public a new and generally acceptable goal to attack. Indeed, despite the government's attempt, through all sorts of authoritative measures, to prevent the development of criticism and of a really free, independent press, the authoritarian spirit still lives on here, its representatives being, for the most part, hardly conscious of it. Since in the near future the right of licensing papers will be given into German hands, it is especially desirable that a truly impartial press be stabilized before such a surrender is made.

Outwardly the newspapers show the traditional picture of the German press, except for size; the leading political articles generally appear on the first page next to the news; one page a week was usually devoted to the Nürnberg trials; the bottom section of the paper is mostly used for criticism; because of the lack of paper serialized novels are still omitted. The typographical picture, in contrast to that of the Third Reich, is very

conservative; even the better papers have very quiet headlines made up of small size type; the *Frankfurter Zeitung* has remained the model for many papers. The apparent separation of information from opinion with the introduction of an editorial page, in the American style, also begins to find favor in many papers.

Books of the Week

Shelley: A Life Story. Edmund Blunden. Viking. \$3.75.

SET A THIEF to catch a thief goes for a poet too: Edmund Blunden, a distinguished contemporary British poet, has written an admirable life of the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Sensitive and sensible both, Mr. Blunden worships the invisible sun of Shelley's genius, yet faces the appalling waste of dross and shame which his "pure flame" left unconsumed. Rarely has the world known a more perfect poet; only too often, alas, such a mess of a man. For all his high-falutin' talk, Shelley made more women wretched than ever did that poor sensual debaucher Lord Byron; Shelley tilted only at such windmills as he could reach comfortably from the gates of whatever park, or from the windows of whatever palazzo he might be inhabiting; he never suffered seriously for attacking any grave injustice, nor promoted a single reform. Nor is it essentially a function of poetry to do either, but why pretend so fabulously? Cold hands, they say, betoken a warm heart: Shelley's hands were forever hot. In the savage age of Peterloo, when English workmen were sent to the galleys for their first frail attempts to form trade-unions, he bleated against Lord Eldon, the savage Chancellor, and Lord Castlereagh, the reactionary foreign secretary, while stravaging about labeling himself "atheist" on his passport, and living fatly off a father whom he hated, but from whom he had no objection to inheriting.

Mr. Blunden has lyrically drawn the "golden boy," petted in childhood, at Oxford grasping the baby in the arms of a young mother passing by, and inquiring in a piercing voice and with a wistful look "Will your baby tell us anything about pre-existence, Madame?" or performing a "pedestrian steeplechase," whilst carrying a pair of dueling pistols through the Oxfordshire countryside. After his abduction of a 16-year-old schoolgirl, Shelley wrote his father (whom he described as "an inkstand incapable of free agency") "Think not I am an insect whom injuries destroy" (did Kafka know this?) and "frightened his mother and sister exceedingly, so that now if they hear a dog bark they run upstairs." He came late to verse, and his first writings are in prose: at nineteen he describes the lake district as containing sights "attunable to the contemplation." Mr. Blunden wisely comments that at this stage, he "still fancied that the imported quasi-philosophical attitude was more impressive than the thing itself."

After his expulsion from Oxford, Shelley set off to give comfort to the Irish rebels, pressing a Miss Hitchener, a school-teacher, to leave her job and join him and his wife. "Let your pure spirit animate our proceedings . . . happiness and hope attend my dearest friend until we meet at the post office, Dublin." His methods of conversion on arrival were to select his readers: "I stand at the balcony of our window and watch till I see a man who looks lively: I throw a book at him." It is

not known how many friends were won or people influenced by this method, but the Shelleys next settled at Lynmouth, with Eliza, Mrs. Shelley's sister, and Miss Hitchener at last. For pillorying the publisher of Tom Paine, Shelley wrote a rude letter to Lord Ellenborough, which he distributed partly in dark green bottles launched in the Bristol channel, partly in ballrooms: and this in wartime! Naturally the Shelleys were kept under police observation, but as always Shelley had the fun, and others took the rap. Meanwhile he had wearied of Miss Hitchener, but whether she lent him a hundred pounds, or he paid her this sum to go away does not seem to have been determined. Mr. Blunden exquisitely remarks Shelley's growing appreciation of external loveliness "there the arbutus was seen in its perfection, clothing rock and cliff: that beautiful sight stayed with Shelley all his life." He was growing practical too: no longer does he try to print an atheistical poem: it is now the notes that will be "long, philosophical, and anti-Christian. This will be unnoticed in a note . . . a small neat quarto, on fine paper, and so as to catch the aristocratic. They will not read it, but their sons and daughters may."

And yet this tiresome, almost ridiculous, absurdly handsome boy had written "Queen Mab" at 20, and before he died at 30 was to have produced a body of incomparable verse. This should give our drooling bobby-soxers, basking overlong in an artificially prolonged adolescence, to think.

Shelley's first meeting with Mary Godwin led quickly to his first trip to Europe, that *voyage à trois* (for Mary's half sister Jane, better known as Claire, insisted on coming along) which was the poet's version of the grand tour. He came back to borrow twenty pounds from the wife he had deserted. Mr. Blunden makes his readers feel that there were idyllic moments with Mary, and the life at Geneva, which later also Byron shared, was romantic in the extreme, but Mary must not be credited with the whole of Shelley's improvement as a poet, for his emulation of and rivalry with Byron counted for something, even by Freudian guess. Byron even expostulated when in the hut on the Mer de Glace Shelley added "an ingenious Greek hexameter defining himself as philanthropist, democrat and atheist, to his signature in the visitors book." "It was bad taste, to say the least of it," Byron remarked.

As in the boy Nelson's home, October 21st was celebrated as a feast day because a Suckling great-uncle had won that day a signal victory, so also across the young Shelley's path flowed the shadow of his watery death. Playing with paper boats on Hampstead Heath, Shelley, after his wife's suicide in the Serpentine, "playfully said how much he should like it if we could get into one of the boats and be shipwrecked—it was a death he should like better than any other." And again, and again in his verses, he returned to the "unfathomable sea." Mr. Blunden tells again the story of Trelawney trying to teach Shelley to swim: how he dived in and lay quietly at the bottom protesting when he was rescued.

Mr. Blunden is at his best describing the Italian years: the flowery meadow high among the Apennines, where "the cicada played them all the way to that kingdom of the sweet jonquils" and Shelley's dearest adventure which was "simply watching the changing and eternal heavens above him, their gathering thunderstorms, their delicate gossamer clouds, and white wool-packs, their sheet light-

ning and their nightpiece of moon and stars." And the absurd that surrounded their lives is puckishly told: there is Count Taaffe, the mad Irishman, sending Mary two guinea-pigs and ending his letter "O, that I were one of those guinea-pigs and that I might see you this morning" or Byron traveling with four fat pet geese in cage under his carriage (he regularly fattened one to eat each Michaelmas, but by that time the goose and he were such friends that he could not bring it to table.) Sometimes Mr. Blunden uses expressions as strange as his subject: "the disappointed old hunks" for example.

Poor Shelley! Ten days before his death he wrote to Gisborne "I think one is always in love with something or other, the error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is perhaps eternal." Perhaps, had he lived, he might have come to the truth here adumbrated, that it is of the nature of every true love only finally to express itself in the Eternal, "*cui omnia vivunt*."

ANNE FREMANTLE.

It May Never Happen. V. S. Pritchett. Reynal. \$2.50.

ACCORDING to the jacket on his collection of short stories, V. S. Pritchett can be most favorably compared with Chekhov and Turgenev. One reads in the blurb this exorbitant phrase: "... his [Pritchett's] stories have the maturity and importance of such contemporary classics as Katherine Anne Porter, Ernest Hemingway, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf."

Certain it is that "It May Never Happen" lacks interest in and sympathy for the dreary characters in its midst; depraved and thwarted clerks, neurotic females (frightening pugs), fanatics and mousey youths. That rules out the two Russians; also, their style is not oblique and clipped. Mr. Pritchett's preoccupation with a truly dismal and top-heavy caricature of the human race is often trenchant. His writing is properly lean. He has something of Hemingway's sordid locale and economy of style, but little of his toughness. I can see not the slightest grounds for bringing in the ladies mentioned in the blurb, for either of the reasons given.

Mr. Pritchett's tales deal with the lower middle class English, the "fumed oak" stratum of British "refeement" and respectability. In "The Sailor" we see an ex-salt resisting Temptation like mad, only to finally nose-dive into a night of drunken sin. "The Fly in the Ointment," "The Chestnut Tree," and "It May Never Happen" take place in depressing London offices. The clerks, bosses, office boys are abnormally unpleasant. "Pocock Passes" is the story of the pathetic friendship of two enormously fat men and their liquorish routs. "The Saint" dunks a religious fanatic into the river from a punt; (mind over matter—Mr. Timberlake does not allow himself to feel wet!) There is the animal satire of "The Ape," which I felt put Mr. Pritchett on home ground. He seems to have more genuine emotion about monkeys than men.

It seems to me that the real weakness here is the heartlessness and distorted, night-marish portrayal of humanity. The author knows how to write, but he abuses his careful talent for irony by inflating his caricatures to the size of unwieldy, over-blown cartoons.

I am not carping about V. S. Pritchett's choice of loonies and locale. My protest is against his denial of pity and understanding for his crummy clerks and worn-

out women and joyless lads. He cannot be more than a very minor writer if he does not temper the mind's science with the heart's intuition.

Mr. Pritchett's disdain nearly proves his undoing. For a writer of his pronounced capabilities it is the greater pity.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

The Chequer Board. Neville Shute. Morrow. \$2.75.

UNLIKE many modern novels, "The Chequer Board" is very easy to understand. The intention of the author, the device he selected to embody this intention and the impact of the story are simplicity itself.

During the war Mr. Shute served both as an aeronautical expert in the Royal Navy and as a newspaper correspondent in Calcutta and Burma. In the East he became acutely sensitive to racial problems and he resolved to write a book about the ordinary English business man, who has nothing to do with the government or with ideologies, who comes "with a fresh unbiased mind to the color problem." In possession of a theme, Mr. Shute then found an easy if somewhat implausible device.

The story of Jackie Turner, a cereal salesman, is related by a surgeon who informed him that he has only a few months to live. Turner decides that he will spend this time visiting three men with whom he became acquainted in a hospital. The first is a young R.A.F. flyer who had divorced his frivolous show-girl wife to find happiness with a beautiful and philosophical Burmese woman. The second is Dave Lesurier, an American negro from Tennessee, who survived an attempted suicide and a false charge of rape to win an honorable place in the white society of England. The third is the ex-Commando Duggie Brent. Brent killed an Irish bully, half-unintentionally, for insulting him and his girl companion.

Turner finds that each of them, despite the obstinacy of society, has successfully adapted himself to life. The conversations are thick with well-disguised sermons on tolerance and understanding. Unfortunately sympathy for the individuals has betrayed Mr. Shute into a far from admirable indifference to values. Buddhism for instance is represented as a satisfactory solution to Turner's worries about the afterworld. "I kind of like what them Buddhists have the best—what Mr. Morgan and Nay Htohn believe" he says to his wife before dying. In short, Mr. Shute solves his problem by a fatally easy Nathan-esque escape into myth.

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

Distinguished Negroes Abroad. Beatrice Jackson Fleming and Marion Jackson Pryde. Associated. \$2.65.
Clever Hands of the African Negro. Wilfrid D. Hamblly. Associated. \$2.65.

MOST OF our interracial literature is devoted to showing that a man is a man even though he is a Negro, as it were. It is incredible the amount of reasoning and information that has been necessary in order to propagate this very simple truth; namely, that the Negro is essentially like everybody else and that every individual, according to the laws of God and society, should be treated simply like the human being that he is. Nevertheless, we are human beings in many ways. While we naturally reject racialism and its false estimates of humanity, we also have our human loyalties, our legitimate pride in the achievements of our own racial group.

So alongside the literature which proclaims the free-

dom of the Negro and his educational advance there is also the story of Negro achievement. Much of the credit for this work is due to the patient labors of the Associated Publishers, Inc., Washington, D. C., under the competent direction of Dr. Carter G. Woodson. These two modest little volumes are a useful contribution to this end. "Distinguished Negroes Abroad" contains many familiar names known to students of Negro history, such as Juan Latino, Alexandre Dumas (father and son), Ira Aldridge, Daniel Taylor, Abram Hannibal, Alexander Pushkin and Toussaint Louverture and others who are much less known, and it is to the credit of the authors that they have been able to dig up so much information. The volume is a school book, the stories are simply and interestingly told and cover the Orient, Spain, France, England, the West Indies and South America and range from the half legendary heroes of Arabia to the late Governor Felix Eboué in our own day. "Clever Hands of the African Negro" is a peculiarly delightful little series of pictures of the mysteries of African craftsmanship; for instance, in the field of weaving, woodcarving, blacksmithing, the use of bark, different kinds of musical instruments, leather working, etc. The author is curator of African Ethnology in the Chicago Natural History Museum. He has the gift of introducing the young reader to the very personalities of a native workman, giving the workman's psychology and his peculiar techniques. It is richly and charmingly illustrated. The reader will learn about elephants' friendships; how drums are tuned; how cloths are stamped; how to make a pig comfortable on his way to market; what they said to Ndumbu when he was installed as the village blacksmith; and sundry other matters. Will all these skills perish when we finally obtain world mass production? I think of the old boys who once laid the wonderful walls of uncut stone in Rhode Island, and wonder. But in the meanwhile, add some of these little books to your children's library, and the children may one day solve the problem where our own great economic wisdom has fallen flat.

JOHN LAFARGE.

There Was Once A Slave. Shirley Graham. Messner. \$3.00.

IF THIS BOOK had been intended as a biography of Frederick Douglass, escaped slave and abolitionist extraordinary, it would be a failure. It is, professedly, the story of Douglass. Yet he moves through its pages with the impersonality and coldness of a mechanical toy.

Actually Miss Graham has written a concise history of the whole Abolition Movement. Frederick Douglass is a point of reference, around whom revolve such diverse characters as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and John Brown. Except for a common goal, there was little unity in the fight against Negro slavery in the United States. There were those who felt that the public conscience, aroused by propaganda, would do the trick. Others saw political pressure as the only weapon offering hope of success. Still another element was convinced that direct action, even the bloody action of the Kansas massacres, was abolition's best hope. In the end, of course, it was expediency that freed the slaves. But each element in the freedom fight had done its part in making that move expedient.

The Abolition Movement was a phase of American history that was full of fire, a furnace in which human

emotions and passions twisted and seethed. To write interestingly about such a period, it is necessary only to write intelligibly, and Miss Graham has done that. However, the reader closes the book with a feeling of regret that Frederick Douglass stalks so like a figure of fate through the pages of "There Was Once A Slave." Granting that he is used as a symbol, an embodiment—still he must sometimes have smiled, grown impatient, passed a small witticism, indulged little vanities. The author writes of Douglass much as a nun might write of Saint Joseph. The result is a lack of the charm and vitality which would have added much to her book.

There Was Once A Slave was chosen, from among more than six hundred manuscripts submitted, for the Julius Messner Award for the best book combating intolerance in America.

LEO J. TRESE.

Opportunity In Alaska. George Sundborg. Macmillan. \$2.50.

IT IS A rare occasion when an author writing about Alaska can turn out a book that meets the hearty approval of both the Governor of Alaska and the Delegate to Congress from Alaska. The former is really an employee of the Federal Department of the Interior and the latter a citizen of Alaska elected to public office by his fellow-citizens. It is understandable that these two gentlemen should at times not entirely agree upon public policy concerning Alaska, nor see eye to eye in evaluating publications about Alaska. It is worthy of note, therefore, that both the Governor and the Delegate to Congress give Mr. Sundborg's book superlative praise. The Governor has written a foreword to the book and on its jacket states: "An excellent piece of work, and just the book needed now in Alaska and for the countless people who want to come here." The Delegate to Congress adds: "By long odds it is the best thing of its kind ever written about Alaska. It packs a world of factual data into a small space and tells the story well."

It would be impertinent indeed for a one-time citizen of Alaska to contradict the testimony of his peers. The only book I have seen which contains more detailed information about modern Alaska is "A Guide to Alaska," by Merle Colby, written in 1939 as a part of the Federal Writers' Project. But for the prospective settler, Mr. Sundborg's book is definitely superior, for it was written in 1945 and contains much more up-to-date information about current possibilities in the territory. Even though the over-all effect of the book is to paint perhaps a too glowing picture of opportunities in Alaska, the text is restrained and factual and the handicaps to settlement in Alaska are accurately described, including the mosquitos, who have been known to kill even the giant brown bear. An appendix contains useful tables showing temperature variations in different portions of the Territory; transportation costs to key points, etc. In the list Mr. Sundborg gives of the best ten publications on Alaska it is most strange however that he fails to mention Evelyn Stefansson's, "Here is Alaska," which I believe is the most magnificent pictorial survey of Alaska ever published. It is supplemented by an excellent text, perhaps weighed too heavily in its description of Eskimo and Indian life to suit the prospective settler interested in going to Alaska.

Mr. Sundborg explores thoroughly the potentialities of Alaska and surveys each field systematically. He may be too optimistic, however, in assuming that the salmon

supply can be maintained at current levels. The real economic bases of future Alaskan development remain the extractive industries—mining and fishing. The potential pulp industry in Southeastern Alaska appears to be the only industry that might operate on a sustained yield principle and eventually provide a living for several thousand additional Alaskans. All the other opportunities Mr. Sundborg describes—in the service trades, wood industries, boat-building, fur-farming, etc.—rest fundamentally upon the existence of an increasing population supported by the key industries, fishing and mining, and he shows clearly that in these two industries there is at present little opportunity for expansion. Potentially of course, one can always find more minerals in Alaska. In the course of the years, with the expenditure of much capital, vast additional wealth can be tapped. Current history has shown how precarious an economy becomes when it rests upon one or two extractive industries. As the future crossroads of the world, no one can accurately forecast Alaska's future. But for a man who has spent but four years in the territory, Mr. Sundborg has written an excellent book, indispensable to any one who is thinking about going to Alaska. Perhaps it is unkind to mention this, but Mr. Sundborg himself has not settled in Alaska. He is working for the Bonneville Power Administration in the Northwest.

WALTER JOHN MARX.

Gods and Heroes. Gustav Schwab. Pantheon. \$6.00.

GUSTAV SCHWAB was a gifted Suabian poet of the romantic period, best known for his ballads and romances, who wrote also in 1838-40 a book of which the original German title was "The Most Beautiful Legends of Classical Antiquity." In it he retold the Greek legends of the heroic age—Prometheus and Perseus, the Argonauts and Herakles, Theseus and Oedipus, The Seven against Thebes, the tales of Troy and many others—with such freshness and skill that the book became a classic in German literature. It has now been translated into English and issued in a very attractive format by Pantheon. It is a book to be grateful for.

One naturally turns for comparison to Bulfinch's "Age of Fable," a book of similar purpose and period, and perhaps as much loved in the United States as Schwab was in Germany. Bulfinch was, however, more a compiler and less of a literary artist than Schwab. He told his stories from a varying point of view, interspersing passages of comment and interpretation between passages of direct narrative. Schwab likewise compiled his stories from all sources, from Homer to Ovid, but his retelling is purely narrative. Bulfinch tells the stories of antiquity from his standpoint in another age; Schwab reads as if, so to speak, antiquity itself were speaking. It is all story—no interpretation, no comment. This is both the strength and weakness of his book. He retells the great legends of Greece with splendid vigor and charm. The stories are strong, plastic and bright, mingling happily with the strong and plastic illustrations from Greek vase paintings which the editors have used most gracefully and intelligently throughout the text. It is, I think, the most attractive retelling of these great stories in English that has come to my attention. It is perhaps an ungrateful response that so much excellence makes one demand still more on the part of the editors. I have no quarrel with Werner Jaeger's excellent short introduction devoted to

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the artistic and cultural importance of the Greek myths and legends. What I missed was indication of another sort which should make clear to modern readers the immense difference between Greek mythology and all other mythologies. When Schwab and Bulfinch first wrote, there was a widespread knowledge of classic myths *as literature*. Today there is not. In the intervening century there has been a great exploration of the myths and legends of all sorts of primitive cultures—the Haida Indians, the Kentucky mountaineers, the Eskimo and the Solomon Islanders. What the reader of today fails to realize, I suspect, in reading this book, is that these Greek myths are not the anonymous folk art of the primitive Greek race. They represent the plots and the conscious art of a series of great poets and are actually a compendium of one of the world's greatest literatures. What the Greek legends were in their primitive form, we do not know. We know these stories only as they were told by the great writers of the highest culture of Greece and Rome, artists such as Homer or Hesiod, Theocritus or Ovid, Pindar or Aristophanes, Aeschylus or Euripides. They do not tell us what the primitive legends of the race were; they do tell us what the imaginative development of Greek civilization was at its highest, as we find it in a series of minds of exceptional development. For example, the story of Pandora and the entrance of sin and suffering into the world, as Schwab gives it to us, is the story as told by Hesiod, who made it a vehicle of a crude rustic bitterness and cynicism. It was told in different form by others. Other legends are known to us only as they took shape in the art of the clever Roman Society poet Ovid, or the pedestrian Greek compiler Apollodorus whose life is placed variously from the first century B.C. to the ninth A.D., or by Plutarch or Euripides. I kept wishing, as I read this book, that the editors had given it a series of brief notes to place the stories in Greek literature and to characterize the artist from whom we have inherited them, as Edith Hamilton did in her little book "Mythology" a few years ago.

E. P. RICHARDSON.

Irish Gold. Pamela Hinkson. Knopf. \$3.50.

ONE OF the aspects of Irish life that Americans, even of Irish descent, find hardest to grasp is the immense importance of past events. We find life in our great urban centers with their huge and ever transient populations a poor preparation for understanding a settled and almost static rural society in which decisions rendered in the time of King John have recently been judged provisional. In a certain sense we have no past, and we are still confident that the future is ours to mold as we will. The Irish have rarely if ever had any reason to feel that the future was theirs, and they tend to weigh all things in the light of their rich and tragic past, in which each group can find a golden age of which it is intensely aware.

Miss Hinkson has written an engaging book of recollections and impressions of rural Ireland in the twilight of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. The events of 1916-1923 cut the vine on which they were nourished, and in large percentages they have left Ireland. The most conservative revolution of modern times has produced a bourgeois and peasant democracy that has no room for a landed aristocracy, and the era of the Big House is closed at last. Many of the mansions have been destroyed, sometimes with wanton vandalism. Others are institutions now.

and some remain in the hands of old owners now "much reduced in means." Some others have recently been bought by British millionaires in flight from the taxes and austerities of a declining England. The new owners will bring money into the country but cannot, and would not wish to, revive the Ascendancy. Politics is only one aspect of Irish life, and in the world of sport—hunting, for example—the various contending groups find common ground. The description of the local hunt, of the Dublin Horse Show, and of such institutions as the local post office under the incomparable Miss Hogans, will ring true to all visitors to Ireland, as will the references to the innate courtesy and hospitality of all classes. There are many good things in modern Ireland not mentioned in this book, but it is essentially a nostalgic salute to a vanished tribe and age.

FLORENCE D. COHALAN.

Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature.
Horatio Smith, General Editor. Columbia. \$10.00.

IN EIGHT hundred and ninety-nine two column pages this dictionary contains eleven hundred and sixty-seven articles covering the writers and literatures of the twentieth century and the "immediately preceding and closely related decades" in all continental Europe. It is important to say at once, and the Editor says it in a short, interesting and unpretentious preface, that the selection of the authors treated could not be determined with advantage simply by looking up in existing manuals the names that are there—"A Dictionary of Received Ideas is not the object. The constant attitude has been experimental. Collaborators were urged from the very beginning to be bold, free, direct, respectful only of the original documents." There are two hundred and thirty-nine of these collaborators; they chose the authors they wished to write about, and it would be absurd to play the usual game of trying to find some name that has been omitted and write the usual omniscient little phrase. There are enough interesting names, enough information, enough sound judgment in this dictionary to make it serviceable, and a pleasure to consult. In numbers, French authors dominate—naturally. But you can look up Kirasek, Alois, a Czech, or Jochomsson, Matthias, of Iceland, and Germans and Serbs; the facts are there and you never know when you may need them.

Each article is initialed so that you know also who is saying what—a most satisfying arrangement. Because when you read about an author known to you, and concerning whose value you have an opinion, it is pleasant to be able to disagree or not with an identified person rather than with the Columbia University Press, impersonally, or with the editor Mr. Smith if, unjustly, you were to make him responsible for every article in the dictionary. These initials, to which a full list of collaborators provides the key, put responsibility where it belongs. Just to show what I mean, you read the article on Suckert, Curzio (pseud. Malaparte) and find to your surprise that Malaparte "always preserved his own originality and independence of thought," even if he was "one of the most genuine representatives of the adventurous youth which made Fascism possible in Italy." If you happen to have heard elsewhere about his most ambiguous career in and out of favor, in and out of jail, in and out of fascism, it is convenient to know that this excessively favorable judgment represents the entirely legitimate but wholly personal opinion of Professor Giuseppe Prezzolini of Columbia.

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How to Become a Literary Critic. Philip Freund. Beechurst. \$3.00.

ONE BRIGHT July morning, when he was twenty-one years old and living in Rome, Mr. Freund suddenly broke out in a rash of wonder and began to ask himself such questions as: What is man getting at? What, as a matter of fact, has been and is going on in this world? As Mr. Freund knows now, these questions, or something very like them, are freshly bursting in some developing mind most of the time. The setting for the experience is usually less striking than it was in his case (a foundry, a hayfield, or a dance floor are some of the more likely us locations) and most of the people who have been shaken up by such questions are compelled, after breaking stride for a moment to hurry along to work, picking off a few handy answers as they go. Mr. Freund is more fortunate. He has had time to follow up, and in this book he explains his method—for anybody who would like to try it.

After a quick look at what he considered to be the arthritic sciences—philosophy, esthetics, etc.—Mr. Freund decided that the proper study of mankind was the novel, a decision which, judging by several indications of his temperament included in this book, was unavoidable: in a spirited moment he once developed a mock philosophic system of his own called the "Philosophy of the As If and What of It," which apparently still strikes him as a howl; and even now, in his middle years, he has a tendency to compare mellowing books to mellowing Meerscham pipes. Anyway, the novelists he chose for life-long study were Fielding, Melville, Hardy, and Conrad, with D. H. Lawrence thrown in as an appendix. The first four were chosen because, as Mr. Freund sees it, they represent, respectively and in an unusually pure form, the Realist, the Idealist, the Skeptic, and the Romantic—or several of the more obvious stands that man can take up in this world. Lawrence was included in order to maintain a healthy sensual balance in the synthesis Mr. Freund was pursuing. That synthesis never comes out very clearly, but the author's comments on the books he recommends are interesting enough, and seem to contribute to the richer life through literature that he has been aiming at ever since that day back in Rome.

In the late chapters, when Mr. Freund turns to a general discussion of the modern novel, he displays a softness for the works of Arthur Koestler that might have been more tempered if he had not long ago decided that politics, like everything else, are better understood when strained through the novel.

JOHN BRODERICK.

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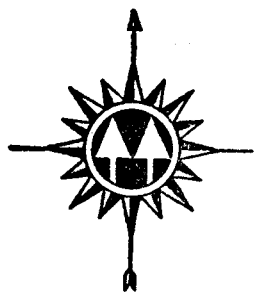
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